

the United States Government committed to the construction of two light-water nuclear reactors in North Korea with major financing from Japan and South Korea. These reactors are designed to diffuse the nuclear development program of the Democrat People's Republic of Korea, the DPRK, that it had operated and, presumably, used to divert weapons grade nuclear material. The new reactors are to be owned and operated by North Korea.

Because North Korea is not known for its nuclear safety, some of the essential American construction firms have, quite understandably, refused to participate in the KEDO effort without insurance. Private insurance companies, sensing a lousy risk, want nothing to do with the KEDO program. As a result, the KEDO program could collapse under its own weight.

In an effort to keep the KEDO program moving forward, some in the executive branch have proposed that the United States provide insurance guaranties for the KEDO program. Mr. Chairman, this is an enormous legal liability that is being contemplated by Executive Order. While the United States continues to participate in the construction of two light-water nuclear reactors in the DPRK is not the issue, we have been participating in the KEDO program since 1995; and funds are included in this bill to continue that support. The question is whether the United States will assume financial liability for the project if accidents occur.

Mr. Chairman, make no mistake, this is potentially a staggering liability. It requires faith in the North Korea engineers, who may or may not have been trained and over whom we have little or no control. It requires faith that North Korea will devote the energy and resources to maintain those reactors. It requires that conflict does not break out on the Korean peninsula. And if North Korea's safety procedures prove inadequate and a Chernobyl-type disaster occurs, it could require tens of billions of U.S. taxpayer dollars. If there is a nuclear accident, there is no quicker way to eliminate the current budgetary surplus that many Members of this body have worked so hard to achieve.

Mr. Chairman, this Member would remind his colleagues that on May 18 of this year, in an amendment to the defense authorization bill, this body considered and voted overwhelmingly to limit the ability to provide such insurance guaranty. But the executive branch is ignoring or seeking to ignore that overwhelming vote. The amendment before this body today sends a very strong message that extending financial guaranties to rogue nations is a serious matter.

If Members of this body are concerned about nuclear proliferation, if my colleagues are concerned about fiscal responsibility, or even if Members are suspicious that North Korea may not be absolutely and irrevocably com-

mitted to cooperation on nuclear non-proliferation with the West, they must vote for this amendment.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BEREUTER. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and rise in support of the Bereuter amendment and commend its sponsor.

This bill provides funding that the Clinton administration has requested to continue carrying out its policy of giving U.S. foreign assistance to North Korea pursuant to the agreed framework of 1994. The Bereuter amendment imposes a sensible condition on the funds that this bill appropriates for North Korea.

This amendment prohibits any money appropriated under this act from being used to assume any liability for the cost of nuclear accidents in North Korea. Incredibly, the administration reportedly is considering making U.S. taxpayers libel in the event that the North Koreans mismanage their nuclear reactors that the administration wants to build there and could trigger a catastrophic nuclear accident. This, obviously, would be folly; and the gentleman from Nebraska is doing all of us a favor by trying to stop the administration from doing this.

The distinguished Chair of our House Republican Policy Committee, the gentleman from California (Mr. COX), has been very active in protecting the interests of the American taxpayer with regard to the possibility that current U.S. policy may create a Chernobyl-style disaster in North Korea. I am pleased to support the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. COX) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) on the defense authorization bill that addresses these concerns, and I am pleased to support the Bereuter amendment to the bill as well.

This is a very timely and important amendment, and I urge our colleagues to support the amendment.

Mr. BEREUTER. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Chairman, I would say that, indeed, the gentleman from California (Mr. COX) has been extremely active. He does have an amendment filed, and I will give him the opportunity to close in a minute.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, if I have ever seen a bad deal, it is this amendment. It is bad from a number of perspectives. It was not that long ago that we were in the well here wringing our hands about the dangers of a North Korean missile coming over and hitting part of the United States, and there was no limit to the funding we would spend to stop this threat from North Korea: \$60 billion for an untested Star Wars program. Rush the program through. We

have spent a third of a billion dollars in the last 9 months.

We all saw the last success of that program when the booster apparently did not get to the target where it was predetermined to hit the mark. So we have spent a third of a billion dollars in the last 9 months. There are people here who want to spend \$60 billion before they find out whether the system works or not to protect us from North Korean missiles. But let us make sure we do not even give the administration an opportunity to work out an agreement that stops the North Korean missile program.

A better title for this bill would be "an amendment to prevent an agreement." Because before we know what the administration wants to do, whether they are going to get a consortium of nations to simply buy an insurance program, whether the Japanese and the others in the region are going to pay the whole tab and we might have to facilitate some of the technical elements of it, Congress is going to rush down here, and we are going to tell President Clinton and his negotiators not to come to an agreement.

We are going to spend \$60 billion on Star Wars whether it works or not. That is a good expenditure, just like the third of a billion we have had for the failed tests. Let us just slow down a bit here. What the administration has achieved is for the first time in 50 years we are having a dialogue with the North Koreans. Now, this is not an easy job. This is about one of the most paranoid societies in the world. Orwell's view of the world could not figure this place out if he had the blueprint in advance.

But, Mr. Chairman, we have got them to stop their nuclear program. We have got them to stop their missile program. There is a lot more we have got to do. We have our allies working together with us in a coordinated program. We always complain about burden-sharing. Here others want to take the lead in the burden, and we have got an amendment on the floor to stop us from participating before we know what that portion of participation is.

I understand the desire not to have anything in North Korea that could give us a liability. But when Congress is ready to pass on a \$60 billion Star Wars program before the technology works, when we have spent a third of a billion dollars in the last 9 months, we should not come here and say we cannot spend a penny to implement, negotiate and come to an agreement that might shut down any future missile or nuclear programs that the North Koreans might undertake is bad policy.

Let us give the administration a chance. This is the toughest country in the world to negotiate with, and we have begun to make progress.

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GEJDENSON. I yield to the gentleman from Alabama.

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and